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SUBJECT: USDA TRAINS VETS IN PULAWY WITH EMERGING MARKETS FUNDS

REF: Warsaw 1580

11. SUMMARY: USDA's Animal Plant Health Inspection Service provided training to 22 veterinarians and scientists of the Ukrainian Veterinary Service at Poland's Pulawy National Institute for Veterinary Science December 1-5, 2008. Poland's vets invited USDA to take part in an EU-sponsored event already planned, showing their openness to cooperate. Poland is an excellent channel for access to Ukraine and Belarus and will have EU funds to spend on veterinary cooperation on EU expansion. Poland's openness and support for sound science in animal disease control reduces risks to the economy and human health in the region.

12. The newly dedicated Pulawy Institute, see reftel, is Europe's most advanced veterinary laboratory and is rapidly becoming a regional resource as a reference laboratory and training center for other EU member states and in Central and Eastern Europe. Its training efforts help to reduce potential threats on the EU's eastern borders by improving the level of readiness of Ukraine's and other countries' veterinary services. The U.S. Department of Agriculture is a partner with Poland on these issues and this visit was supported by a USDA Emerging Markets Program grant of \$18,000. That small grant protects roughly \$150 million in U.S. agricultural exports. End Summary.

TRAINING FOR EASTERN
EUROPE VETERINARIANS

13. Jay K. Mitchell, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Director for Europe at the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) was hosted at the Pulawy Institute by Dr. Tadeusz Wijaska, Director General of the Pulawy Veterinarian Institute (PIVET) and Dr. Jan Zmudzinski, Deputy Director for Research at PIVET. At the training organized by PIVET, Director Mitchell gave two presentations: an overview of APHIS and APHIS's role in animal health and food safety. Mitchell emphasized the role of Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) issues in light of Ukraine's recent WTO membership. He gave a history of SPS agreements within the WTO and stressed the importance of Ukrainian adherence to these WTO SPS agreements. The Ukrainian participants of the training consisted of scientists from the National Scientific Center, Institute of Experimental and Clinical Veterinary Medicine in Kharkov, Ukraine and the Veterinary Control Institute in Lviv, Ukraine. Embassy Warsaw encourages USDA's Cochran Program or other suitable program as excellent tool to train and expose these Ukrainian veterinarians and scientists to the structure of the U.S. veterinary service and procedures used to eradicate or combat animal diseases. The Pulawy Veterinary Institute is an ideal venue to develop quick diagnostic action and response in the case of animal-borne pathogens and diseases that are a global economic threat to agriculture and human health.

FRENCH DELEGATION VISITS PULAWY VETERINARY INSTITUTE

¶4. At the same time Director Mitchell was in Pulawy, the Institute also hosted a French delegation consisting of Mr. Patrick Bonjour, current General Veterinary Inspector and former Deputy Chief Veterinary Officer in France in the mid-1990s, and Mr. Xavier Pacholek, Veterinary Attach at the French Embassy in Warsaw. The delegation visited PIVET to discuss future cooperation between the French Veterinary Service and the Polish Veterinary Authorities to prepare a program of joint training for the Ukrainian Veterinary Service. They will present a bid to the European Commission to fund this project in 2009. The estimated cost of the joint training is over one million euro. If accepted, and the program is successful, it could be extended and the budget enlarged to as much as eight million euro. According to the Polish Veterinary Service, other bids for the same program could be proposed by the Netherlands jointly with Estonia, and Italy with Lithuania. Lithuania's Veterinary Service was supposed to meet French and Polish veterinary authorities in Pulawy, but the delegation did not come.

NEW CHIEF VETERINARY OFFICER

¶5. While visiting Poland, Mitchell called on its Chief Veterinary Officer, Dr. Janusz Zwiazek and Deputy Chief Veterinary Officer, Dr. Krzysztof Jazdzewski, inviting them to the United States for more talks and training. At both meetings the Polish Veterinary Service officials emphasized the importance of cooperation with the U.S. Veterinary Service in the areas of food safety and animal health. The two sides discussed how important it is for USDA to be presenting its side of the animal health issue, and for them to not just hear EU views. Polish Veterinary officials hope to continue cooperation with the U.S. Veterinary Service in promoting international veterinary standards in Ukraine and other countries in Central and Eastern Europe.

¶6. Poland is factoring in Europe's high cost food safety system and is seeing the EC's heavy regulation diminish its competitiveness for no scientific reasons. This has made the Poles more willing to argue for sound science in EU fora. U.S. involvement in Central and Eastern European veterinary projects will ensure that U.S. standards and approaches of animal disease control will be presented to contrast pressure from EU Member States to adopt the EU's procedures in countries like the Ukraine and Belarus. This approach can pay dividends later. Poland, for example, defied EU regulations on its accession in 2004 and left in place regulations that allowed U.S. market access for its meat and animal products exports to Poland a full twelve months after required to stop. As well, since then, when faced with technical requests and no political pressure, Poland's Veterinary Service still supports U.S. market access for dairy, livestock genetics, and transshipments of beef and poultry across the EU, worth millions in trade to the United States.

¶7. Comment. Poland, as the largest country in the region with the most developed veterinary service is a natural leader in creating a platform for the exchange of information regarding animal health. Poland has one of the finest vet services in the EU, if not the globe. End Comment.

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